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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MIAMI BEACH MAYOR DAVID DERMER ANNOUNCES FIRST MEETING FOR THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED BLUE RIBBON PANEL ON THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

(MIAMI BEACH, FL)- ON MAY 20TH, 2003 AT 4PM, MEMBERS OF THE MAYOR'S NEW BLUE RIBBON PANEL ON STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS WILL MEET FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE MAYOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM, LOCATED ON THE 4TH FLOOR OF CITY HALL. THE MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

MAYOR DERMER CREATED THE BLUE RIBBON PANEL TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF SAFETY AND PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES IN THE CITY. DURING MAYOR DERMER'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS GIVEN MARCH 26TH 2003, HE EXPLAINED THE MISSION OF THIS NEWLY CREATED PANEL BY DISCUSSING THREE MAJOR POINTS OF CONCERN:

THERE IS A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE FACING THIS COMMUNITY CONCERNING THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF MANY RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS IN AND OUT OF OUR HISTORIC DISTRICTS. DURING THE PAST YEAR THERE HAS BEEN A DISCONCERTING NUMBER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS THAT HAVE BEEN DEMOLISHED BECAUSE OUR BUILDING DIRECTOR AND ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS HAVE FOUND THAT THESE STRUCTURES ARE UNSAFE AND THREATEN THE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC. THE BUILDING AND ENGINEER EXPERTS HAVE FOUND THAT THE CONCRETE AND STEEL HOLDING UP MANY BUILDINGS

IN MIAMI BEACH ARE DETERIORATING OVER TIME AND MANY ARE SOON REACHING THE LIMITS OF SAFETY.

WE SEE EVIDENCE OF THESE PROBLEMS WHEN THE STEEL RUSTS AND THE CONCRETE SWELLS AROUND THE STEEL AND EVEN CRACKS. SOMETIMES THESE PROBLEMS ARE NOT VISIBLE BUT NEVERTHELESS THE BUILDINGS ARE BECOMING UNSAFE.

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC, ABOUT THE LOSS OF VALUABLE HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND THE COSTS THAT PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS ARE INCURRING AS A RESULT OF A NATURAL AGING PROCESS IN THE SOUTH FLORIDA ENVIRONMENT, WHICH SOME EXPERTS BELIEVE IS CAUSED BY THE SALT WATER IN OUR AIR.

AS A RESULT I AM ANNOUNCING THE CREATION OF A MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON PANEL TO INVESTIGATE THIS PROBLEM AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT HOW THIS CITY CAN RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

FIRST: WE NEED TO FIND A BETTER WAY TO MONITOR OUR BUILDINGS TO DETERMINE WHICH BUILDINGS ARE BECOMING STRUCTURALLY UNSAFE BEFORE THEY BECOME A THREAT TO THE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC SO THAT REPAIRS MAY BEGIN RATHER THAN FACING THE NEED TO DEMOLISH ON AN EMERGENCY BASIS.

SECOND: WE NEED TO FIND A WAY TO PROTECT OUR HISTORIC STRUCTURES FROM DETERIORATION AND TO DETERMINE WHAT INCENTIVES MUST BE GIVEN TO PROPERTY OWNERS TO ASSURE THAT OUR HISTORIC HERITAGE IS PROTECTED.

THIRD: WE NEED TO ASSURE PROPERTY OWNERS THAT IF THEY TAKE RESPONSIBLE STEPS TO PRESERVE THEIR PROPERTY, THAT THEY WILL NOT BE PENALIZED FOR THEIR GOOD FAITH EFFORTS TO REPLICATE AND RESTORE STRUCTURES.

I AM REQUESTING MEMBERS OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS, RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY OWNERS, ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS AND REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS BLUE RIBBON PANEL, WHICH I WILL BE FORMING SHORTLY. THIS PANEL WILL SERVE TO ADVISE THIS CITY ON THESE TECHNICAL ISSUES AND TO GIVE US

**RECOMMENDATIONS ON WHAT LAWS AND REGULATIONS NEED TO
BE APPROVED BY THIS CITY TO ADDRESS THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE.**